

How do I help my child cope with divorce?

When parents divorce, children are forced to handle the separation of their family. How they respond to this decision is dependent on their developmental level and how the topic is approached with them. The way that parents react to the divorce will affect their children's ability to cope with the situation. Children often feel caught in the middle and are pressured to side with either mom or dad. To avoid this from occurring, parents should remain calm when discussing their divorce and support their children's feelings. Children should be reassured that the divorce is not their fault and that although mom and dad's relationship is changing, their relationship with their children will remain strong.

Parents must recognize that divorce is an adult issue and that they should not share these details with their children. They should prepare the family for upcoming changes and help their children adjust by shielding them from parental conflict. Parents are encouraged to maintain a positive relationship with their former spouse and to not talk negatively about the other to their children or in front of them.

Devoting time to each child is important and parents should maintain regular contact with their children. Parents should work together in maintaining consistent routines, rules, and consequences for their children in both households to ease the transition and avoid children playing one parent off of the other as this may occur. Through communication, love, and support, parents can collectively aid their children in overcoming this difficulty and help them move forward.